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*Representative*

**DAVE ANDERSON**

*10th Legislative District*

## 1998 Session Report

Dear Friends,

Once the streams and rivers of western Washington were so choked with spawning salmon that you could figuratively walk from bank to bank across their backs. Nowadays I'm afraid that wouldn't be a bad description of the vehicles on our highways. I still believe I've been privileged to represent the most beautiful and diverse district in the state, but things are changing very rapidly due to growth. Growing pains seemed to be the theme of the just-concluded 1998 legislative session, and I believe this theme will be with us for the foreseeable future.

Our biggest challenge is going to be learning how to grow gracefully while retaining that beauty and quality of life. With the listing of chinook salmon as a threatened species, we further add to that challenge, which touches on many other areas we deal with, or should deal with, in the state Legislature. This session we passed a major bill designed to facilitate comprehensive, long-range watershed planning. We wrote a bill setting up a framework for salmon recovery. We passed a bill that is at least a good start in regulating toxics in fertilizers. We passed a bill to streamline the permitting process for removing salmon passage barriers and other salmon restoration projects.

This was all good work, but real challenges lie ahead. Will we see more of the bipartisan cooperation that went into these planning and framework bills? Or will we once again lose ground when we attempt to formulate the specifics to implement that planning? And there's an equally important question that demands an answer: Can we keep our economy and our ecosystem healthy at the same time?

I suggest we can, if we begin immediately. State government hasn't always been the best long-term planner, rarely looking more than a few months or years into the future. This time we need better vision, and the courage to act today for the good of our future.

Thank you for entrusting me with the responsibility of being your representative in Olympia. I've been honored and humbled by this unique experience.

Sincerely,

Dave Anderson

# *Representative* **DAVE ANDERSON**

## **Planning for Growth**

The Growth Management Act requires cities and counties to adopt transportation plans and to identify the transportation funding that will be required to accommodate expected growth. This is called concurrency; that is, avoid overloading and gridlock by planning for adequate transportation concurrent with growth, instead of reacting in panic after the problem has occurred. HB 1487 states that these concurrency requirements do not apply to state highways and facilities (ferries) except for counties consisting of islands whose only connections to the mainland are state highways or ferry routes. That exception was an amendment I drafted for HB 1487, for a good reason: Since state transportation is the only way to get on or off our islands, it seemed only common sense to consider state concurrency when planning for Island County's expected growth of between 30 and 60 percent over the next couple of decades.

Because there is little realistic hope of miraculously improved transportation facilities anytime soon, the only other option seemed to be to find a way to allow — indeed, to direct — local planners to avoid large-scale new development projects IF those developments would cause the level of service on our roads and ferries to decline measurably; that is the gist of my amendment. It didn't seem fair to me that current residents should have their quality of life seriously compromised just to accommodate large-scale development. It seemed equally unfair that our local tourist-based businesses should suffer because potential patrons weren't willing or able to fight the crowds to get here.

As to how this will affect individuals as opposed to large developers, a transportation staff research analyst has assured me that this statutory language reflects my express intent that individual or small-scale developments that have little effect on congestion should not be affected. Local control will continue to be emphasized. County planners, in consultation with state officials, will establish acceptable levels of service and will decide on the final implementing ordinances; my amendment, however, brings this decision-making into public view so citizens can understand the trade-offs between further development and their ability to get around.

The fact is, our transportation situation is going to get considerably worse before it gets better, even with my amendment. But now, at least, we're making a beginning. We're going to have to get together as a community and focus on the type and quantity of development we can tolerate. That doesn't mean "no development," but islands are special places with limitations and unique problems that require special solutions and an acknowledgement of our limits. HB 1487 gives us a push in that direction.



## **Juvenile Group Homes**

Last year's tragedy in Stanwood exposed some serious flaws in how we deal with juvenile offenders, and I'm gratified that we worked to plug the holes. That's why I was a strong supporter of SB 6445, which tightens standards for which offenders will be eligible to live in group homes, beefs up security in the homes, and allows law enforcement and community authorities at every level to have access to detailed information about the offenders.

## **DUI**

We finally cracked down on the drunken drivers who kill 300 to 400 people on our roads every year, and injure thousands more. A bipartisan anti-DUI package that we approved lowers the criminal-threshold for blood alcohol from .10 percent to .08 percent; raises the penalties for various drunken driving offenses; limits offenders to one deferred prosecution in a lifetime; requires serious offenders to install breath interlock ignition devices on their cars; and automatically yanks the drivers' license of first-time offenders for 90 days.

# 1998 Session Preview

## Education

If you think our highways are crowded, visit a classroom. Washington's K-12 schools have the fourth-most-crowded classrooms in the nation, but the Republican majority once again cut education funding this year. We've pulled nearly \$6,000 out of every classroom in the state since 1993, even though the number of school kids in Washington is growing faster than our overall population — which, as you know, is growing fast enough as it is. I don't believe every problem can be solved with more money, but I also know that education is "the paramount duty" of state government, and we're not doing our duty by balancing the budget on the backs of our children.

## The Environment

I've already written in my opening letter about the start we made this year toward restoring salmon and cleaning up our water. Some of our other small but important steps this year include a watershed management bill, and a resolution to Congress urging the U.S. government to resolve the U.S.-Canada fishing dispute, enforce the 200-mile limit, and provide funds for salmon recovery. As a member of the Natural Resources Committee, I take a keen interest in this area, and I've encouraged my colleagues in the House and Senate to continue our efforts to take care of the bounty we've been given.



## Teenage Smoking

Studies tell us the earlier a person begins to smoke, the worse the chances are that they will be able to stop. To reduce the occurrence of teenage smoking, we've made it illegal for retailers to sell tobacco to kids, but for some reason, we'd never prohibited minors from having or smoking cigarettes . . . until this year. We now have one more tool to work with to protect the health of our kids.

## Transportation

When the Legislature was debating House Bill 2894 (the Republican transportation plan), I argued against the bill, saying that it would jeopardize the general fund if the economy cools, putting health care,



education and other vital programs at risk. This plan calls for funding \$2.4 billion in transportation projects by using a complex formula of budgetary manipulation highlighted by diverting the motor vehicle excise tax (MVET) that previously went into the general fund. The MVET funds would now be used to help finance 25 years of bonding for transportation projects. Like many of my colleagues, I also urged the Legislature to formulate a bipartisan package that would not bond so far into the future to pay for just a few years of projects. I'm a firm believer in the "pay as you go" school of fiscal responsibility, and I endorse the bipartisan approach to transportation solutions that has been a time-honored legislative tradition — until this year, I'm afraid. I believe that if the Legislature had worked as a team for the best interests of the people of Washington, we would already be on our way to solving some of our state's most urgent and serious transportation problems.

Governor Locke had indicated his intent to veto the measure if it was sent to his desk. The bill was passed with a referendum clause, which bypassed the Governor and instead sent the measure to the November ballot.

*(more on next page)*

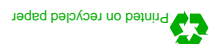
## **News for Seniors**

As I noted in my last newsletter, the concerns of Washington's senior citizens were high on this Legislature's agenda. In this session we

- increased the income limits for disabled and senior citizen property-tax relief exemption from \$28,000 to \$30,000 per year;
- enacted "case mix" legislation that bases nursing home rates on the needs of the patient rather than setting uniform, one-size-fits-all rates;
- cracked down on unauthorized users of disabled parking places and passes; and
- shifted oversight of boarding homes from the Department of Health to the Department of Social and Health Services.

Thanks again for allowing me to serve as your representative. Even though the session has ended, I'll be working on several issues and legislative task forces during the interim, and I encourage you to get in touch by phone, e-mail or in person any time you like.

*Dave Anderson*



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*Representative*

**1998 Session  
Report**

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U. S. POSTAGE PAID  
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